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APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS.

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THE AUTHOR STATES APPLIED LINGUISTICS SHOULD BE INCLUDED AS A REQUIRED COURSE OF STUDY IN THE CURRICULUM FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS, ALTHOUGH THE INCLUSION POSES MANY PROBLEMS AND NECESSITATES THE EXPANSION OF THE PRESENT-DAY FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER CURRICULUM. THE STUDY OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS CANNOT BE UNDERTAKEN PROFITABLY BEFORE THE STUDENT POSSESSES A HIGH DEGREE OF PROFICIENCY IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND THE NATIVE LANGUAGE TOGETHER WITH KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN THE FIELDS OF DESCRIPTIVE LINGUISTICS AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LANGUAGE LEARNING. THE IMPLICATION IS THAT, IF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ARE TO BE GIVEN BETTER PROFESSIONAL TRAINING THAN IS GENERALLY AVAIABLE TODAY, A REVISED CURRICULUM INCLUDING APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND RELATED SUBJECTS IS IN ORDER. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN THE "ILLINOIS JOURNAL OF EDUCATION," VOLUME 57, NUMBER 6, WHOLE NUMBER 534, OCTOBER 1966. (AUTHOR)

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THE COVER STORY

Ray Page, Superintendent of Public Instruction, reviews an issue of *El Puertorriqueño*, a weekly Spanish-language newspaper published in Chicago. Derald Merriman, Foreign Language Curriculum Supervisor, is translating an article which describes a Title III, NDEA, in-service teacher training workshop to Superintendent Page and Paul Woods, Director, Title III, NDEA. This Workshop in Applied Linguistics, conducted by Professor Waldemar Matias at the Chicago Loop Junior College, proved to be an asset to foreign language teachers in the Chicago area.

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APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

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Profound changes have been wrought in the field of foreign language education in the United States as a result of our involvement in World War II and our emergence as one of the leading world powers. The outbreak of the War and the intensification of American participation in international affairs created a demand for additional personnel possessing proficiency in the various foreign languages, especially in those languages not commonly taught in the United States. The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), enrolling the assistance of some outstanding linguists, took the initiative to correct this deficiency by establishing the Intensive Language Program. Within one year after its creation this Program was offering instruction in twenty-six languages to some 700 students. Several innovations made at this time proved successful, and in effect, have influenced an on-going revision of the aims and methods of foreign language instruction. A broader and more balanced perspective now includes mastery of language skills for active communication in addition to an understanding of all aspects of the foreign culture and civilization. In spite of this apparent progress definitive solutions for the teaching of languages have not yet been found. Together with the dogmatic claims of some linguists, we must consider the warnings of other linguists who are frankly skeptical about the significance of the insights attained in linguistics for the teaching of languages. This disagreement among linguists, attesting their intellectual vigor, augurs well for future developments. As additional knowledge becomes available, new conclusions will have to be formulated, but meanwhile the daily educational process must go on. The purpose of this article is to discuss the contributions that linguistic science has made to the practical problems for foreign language teaching, and to recommend that applied linguistics be included as a required subject of study in programs for training foreign language teachers.

Prior to World War II, foreign language teaching was largely in a dormant state, no doubt because of the isolationist reaction which had set in when the United States chose not to become a member of the League of Nations. During this same period, a handful of American descriptive linguists were working with great enthusiasm toward the formulation of a satisfactory theory of language. On the practical level, these linguists experienced much success in evolving techniques which they successfully applied in describing certain heretofore unrecorded American Indian languages. It soon became evident that these same techniques could be applied to the teaching of languages. The orderly and systematic procedures used by linguists in arriving at significant conclusions about the structure of a language and about

Noam Chomsky, "Linguistic Theory" in *Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.* Reports of the Working Committees (New York, 1966) p. 43.

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the ways of teaching a language revealed tremendous possibilities for the improvement of foreign language teacher training.

The fundamental feature of the approach was the use of a scientific descriptive analysis as the basis for creating materials. The most notable leader in teaching English as a foreign language, Charles C. Fries, said, "It is the practical use of the linguistic scientist's technique of language description, in the choice and sequence of materials, and the principles of method that grow out of these materials, that is at the heart of the so called 'new approach to language learning'." The success of the ACLS Intensive Language Program, and those which followed, the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) and the Army's Civil Affairs Training School (CATS) are too well known to bear repetition here. Since the termination of the War, foreign language teachers have joined the linguists in both government and academic circles to meet the demand for improved instruction for the constantly increasing numbers of persons studying foreign languages.

After an initial period of distrust and hostility between foreign language teachers and linguists, lines of communication were opened, and the foreign language profession now recognizes that it can profit from the findings of linguistic science. The acceleration of awareness concerning the contributions that linguistic science can make to language teaching may be credited in large part to the missionary role played by the NDEA-sponsored Institutes for Foreign Language Teachers. Since 1959 these Institutes alone have given introductory courses in general linguistic science and applied linguistics to approximately 19,000 foreign language leaders. Applied linguistics, the branch of linguistic science of greatest significance to language teaching, involves the utilization of linguistic methods, findings and attitudes in working out practical teaching problems, especially those revolving about the conflicts between the native and the target languages. It is only reasonable to expect that since modern foreign language teaching is largely based on scientific linguistic premises, teacher-training curricula would necessarily include the study of applied linguistics. Curriculum changes, incorporating new concepts in education, lag notoriously in our colleges and universities. For this reason, a plea is made for a concerted effort by the departments responsible for foreign language educational programs to act quickly to provide courses in applied linguistics as part of the required teacher training program.

A few of the assumptions set forth by linguistic science which have given direction to modern foreign language teaching, together with implications for teacher training, appear below:

(1) Language is primarily spoken. Language is what the native speaker says;

(a) The student's first objective is to understand and speak the foreign language, and likewise to be understood.

(b) The written language is a secondary representation of the spoken language, not to be confused with the spoken language, and to be taught after mastery of the spoken patterns.

Implication for the teacher is: a near-native to native proficiency in the target language in order to provide accurate models of the spoken language.

Charles C. Fries, *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language,* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1945), p. 7.

(2) Language is patterned oral behavior which must be learned as a set of habits.

(a) Behavior can be learned only by inducing the students to perform.

(b) The audio-lingual approach based on pattern practice, contrasts, and substitutions is a proper beginning for the acquisition of automatic control of the fundamental patterns.

Implication for the teacher is: mastery of the relevant principles of behavioristic psychology, to use them in guiding the formation of language habits.

(3) Each language is a unique system with a structure that may be described in terms of a scientific analysis of observable formalities and deeper lying patternings.

Implications for the teacher are: ability to analyze and contrast both the native language and the target language according to solid linguistic methods, and ability to transpose the fundamentally significant matters of structure and sound system to learning materials arranged in a proper sequence and with emphasis on the conflicts between the two languages.

Before adopting courses in applied linguistics in foreign language education curricula, three serious problems must be considered: (1) If the applied linguistics course is to be meaningful, students must bring with them certain preparation which may not be readily available on many campuses at this time. Certainly a prerequisite for a course in applied linguistics is an introductory course in descriptive linguistics designed to lead to an understanding of the formal procedures of analysis such as the comparison of similarities and dissimilarities of utterances and substitutability within the same utterances to derive the grammatical categories of language. These are the same techniques which have been accepted as methodology for the audio-lingual approach. (2) The student will have to have completed more than a cursory introduction to educational psychology. To utilize the findings of linguistic science in methodology, the teacher-trainee must be able to find solutions for problems of motivation and habit formation as well as systematization, sequencing, and minimal steps in creating and using the learning materials. The ability to manipulate, not merely recognize and identify these and other applicable principles of behaviorism will be required. (3) The student must possess a superior command of the patterns of both the native and target languages. The foreign language departments may have to seek the assistance of the English and/or linguistics as well as the psychology departments to provide the interdisciplinary background needed to support a course in applied linguistics. In spite of the obstacles to be overcome in establishing such a course, the results will be well worth the effort. There is no doubt that good training in applied linguistics can best provide the necessary insights regarding the structures and sounds to be taught and the most efficient manner by which they may be taught.

William G. Moulton, "Linguistics and Language Teaching in the United States, 1940-1960" in *Trends in European and American Liguistics,* (Utrecht, 1962), pp. 82-109.

Robert L. Politzer, "The Impact of Linguistics on Language Teaching: Past, Present and Future," in MLJ, XLVIII (1964), 148.